



STATE OF MAINE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
242 STATE STREET  
18 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0018

THOMAS L. WELCH  
CHAIRMAN

WILLIAM M. NUGENT  
STEPHEN L. DIAMOND  
COMMISSIONERS

AUGUST 10, 2000

CAD Bulletin No.: 2000-02

TO: Telephone Utilities  
FROM: Derek D. Davidson, Director, Consumer Assistance Division  
SUBJECT: Enhanced Lifeline Services for Native Americans

.....

Eligible telecommunications carriers<sup>1</sup> (ETCs) in Maine need to be aware of a recent FCC rulemaking that could potentially affect them. On June 30, 2000, the FCC released its "Twelfth Report and Order, Memorandum Opinion and Order, and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" that increased the Lifeline and Link-Up benefits for native Americans living on "federally-recognized American Indian and Alaskan Native Tribal lands." Specifically, the Order:

- ★ Provides up to \$25 per month in additional federal Lifeline Assistance (Lifeline) support to eligible telecommunications carriers serving qualifying low-income individuals living on American Indian and Alaska Native lands in order to substantially reduce the cost of basic telephone service for such individuals;
- ★ Provides up to \$70 per consumer in additional federal Lifeline Connection Assistance (Link Up) support to eligible telecommunications carriers initiating service to qualifying low-income individuals living on American Indian and Alaska Native lands to offset initial connection charges and line extension costs associated with the initiation of service on behalf of those individuals;
- ★ Broadens Lifeline and Link Up consumer qualifications criteria for low-income consumers on tribal lands to include income-dependent eligibility criteria employed in means-tested

<sup>1</sup> "Eligible telecommunications carriers" are designated as such by the Commission for purposes of section 214 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Public Law 104, 110 Stat.56.

programs in which such individuals may be more likely to participate and therefore are more suitable income proxies for such individuals. These include the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) general assistance program, tribally-administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Head Start (only for those meeting its income-qualifying standard), and the National School Lunch Program's free lunch program;

- ★ Requires eligible telecommunications carriers to publicize the availability of Lifeline and Link Up support in a manner reasonably designed to reach those likely to qualify for those discounts;
- ★ Permits eligible telecommunications carriers that are not subject to rate regulation by a state commission to receive the \$1.75 of second-tier Lifeline support without state commission approval;
- ★ Permits tribal authorities and eligible telecommunications carriers that are not subject to rate regulation by a state commission to provide the local matching funds necessary to receive third-tier federal Lifeline support.

DD/kp



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER